Numb. XXIII.

The LOVER.

By MARMADUKE MYRTLE, *Gent.*

Quod latet Arcanâ non enarrabile fibrâ. Perſ.

Saturday, April 17. 1714.

Mr. MYRTLE,

'WHEN you firſt erected your Lodge, 'you then took upon you to be a Patron of Lovers, and at the ſame 'time promiſed your Aſſiſtance to all 'thoſe who ſhou'd addreſs themſelves to you for 'Advice, the better to conduct them thro' all thoſe 'Paths of Love, which, it is to be preſumed, you 'have often trod before them.

'It is this Conſideration which emboldens me 'to give you the trouble of this, without offer'ing at any formal Apology for it. It is a 'mighty Pleaſure and a ſolid Satisfaction to a 'Man, to reflect that he has it in his Power 'to be ſerviceable to others; and ſince I am con'fident of your Ability, if you deny me the Bene'fit of it, I ſhall grudge you the Poſſeſſion of ſuch 'an Advantage, and value you no more, tho' a 'Maſter in the Art of Love, than I would a Mi'ſer for his Wealth, when he poorly reſerves it to 'himſelf, and can't find in his Soul to beſtow the 'leaſt part of it to the moſt needy and indigent.

'That you may be the better able to preſcribe, 'I ſhall beg leave to lay my real Condition before 'you without Art or Diſſimulation. I am, in plain 'Terms, what you call a Rover, or a general Lo'ver. I am of the moſt perverſe, untoward, amo'rous Conſtitution imaginable; I have ſcarcely 'ever ſeen that Female who had not ſome Charm 'or other to catch my Heart with; and I dare ſay 'I have been a Slave to more Miſtreſſes than 'ſwell the Account of *Cowley*'s Ballad called '*The Chronicle*. I have frequently been loſt in Tran'ſports at the Sight of a *Chloe* or a *Sachariſſa*, and 'have admired many an ugly *Corinna* for Wit or Hu'mour. *Myra* has charm'd me ten thouſand times 'with her Singing, and my Heart has leap'd for Joy 'when Miſs *Aiery* has been dancing a Jig, or *I'ſabella* has moved a Minuit. My Heart has burnt 'and crackled like Char-coal at the flurt of a Fan, 'and I have ſometimes fallen a Sacrifice to an hoop'd 'Petticoat. In ſhort, there is ſcarce a Woman, I 'ever laid my Eyes on, that I have not liked and 'loved, admired and wiſh'd for; The Pretty, the 'Wiſe, the Witty, the Gay, the Prude and the Co'quet, all, all from the fine Lady down to the dextrous 'Molly who waits with the Kettle at my Siſter's 'Tea-Table, have made Scars or Wounds in my 'Heart. And yet after all this — which is ſome'what ſtrange — My Heart is as whole as ever. — 'What I mean is this; that notwithſtanding the 'Multiplicity of Darts which have been ſhot at me, 'yet they never made any laſting Impreſſion on me, 'or have been able to throw me into an Humour 'ſerious enough to think of Marriage. Tho' I con'feſs the Temper, I am now complaining of, has 'been exceeding troubleſome to me, yet I could 'not help thinking Matrimony a Cure worſe than the 'Diſeaſe. Beſide, how ſhall I be certain I ſhan't be the 'ſame Latitudinarian in Love after I have ſwal'lowed the bitter Doſe? It is for this Reaſon that 'I have long uſed my Endeavours to find out ſome 'other Remedy for my Diſtemper; and to that 'End I have had Recourſe to all thoſe famous 'Phyſicians who have pretended to write for the 'Good of thoſe Perſons who have been in my 'whimſical Circumſtances. — But, alas! after a 'long and tedious Conſultation, among theſe 'mighty Profeſſors, I could not perceive my ſelf 'one Jot the better. I am convinced they are all a Par'cel of Pretenders, and that I had no more Buſineſs to 'expect any Benefit from them, than one afflicted 'with the Gout has to hope for an infallible Cure 'from your boaſting ſham Doctors who diſperſe 'their Bills and Advertiſements thro' every Street 'in *London*.

'The firſt I addreſs'd my ſelf to, was, that *Galen* 'in Love, *Ovid*. The Fellow had a ſmooth 'Tongue, and really talked very prettily. He 'ſhew'd me a great many ſoft Letters of his own 'compoſing, told me ſome odd ſurpriſing Stories, 'made me ſigh at his mournful Elegies, and pro'miſed me, that if I wou'd carefully obſerve his 'Rules, and follow thoſe Directions laid down in 'his *Philo diſpenſatory*, or *Arte Amandi*, I need 'not doubt but my Buſineſs was done. He deli'vered this with ſo ſerious an Air, that ſilly I be'gan to believe him, and gather hopes of a perfect 'Recovery, till one Day, when I was giving great 'Attention to him, I heard him break off in the 'midſt of his Harrangue, and immediately cry out 'in the Exclamatory Stile —

Hei mihi! quod nullis amor eſt medicabilis herbis.

'From that very Moment I thought him an igno'rant Coxcomb, and never meddled with him 'ſince.

'The next I ventur'd upon was good *Abraham* '*Cowley*, he was looked upon as a Proficient in his 'way, and was very much in Vogue among the 'Ladies, for gently handling their Hearts, and ea'ſily getting at their Paſſions. His greateſt Buſineſs

'by

(Price Two Pence.)

'lay among such as had but newly received their 'Wounds, and some expected great Refreshment 'from his balmy Compositions; but it has been 'said by others, that he was the worst in the World 'at a green Wound, and that whoever took him in 'hand when they were first hurt, they rather grew 'worse than better. However, I was resolved to 'undergo one Course with him; I was introduced 'into his Company by a young Cousin of mine, 'who was at that time either in Love, or the Green-'Sickness, and in a little time I was intimately ac-'quainted with his *Mistress*. I was, I remember, 'mightily pleased to hear him tax the Ladies, and 'justifie his own Fickleness, by asking them, Cou'd 'they call the Shore Inconstant, which kindly em-'braced every Wave? — Ah, thinks I! This is 'a Doctor after my own Heart — his Case is ex-'actly mine — But alas! I had not kept him Com-'pany long before I discovered, that for all his 'Skill in Numbers, he was but an Ignorant Physi-'cian, since he cou'd not Cure himself. The third 'I went to was Mrs. *Behn*. She indeed, I thought, 'understood the Practick Part of Love better than 'the Speculative; but she was a dangerous Quack, for a 'sight of her always made my Distemper return upon 'me. I liked some parts of her *Lovers Watch*, and 'wou'd have bought it from her: She told me she 'would hire the use out to me for a little time, but 'that she wou'd not sell it all out.

'The last I advised with was the most renown'd 'Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq; He was a Person of great 'Note and Fashion: Had very good Practice in 'this City for some Years: He had acquired a large 'Stock of Fame and Reputation for his Experience 'in the World, his Acquaintance with all the little 'Weaknesses and Infirmities incident to Human 'kind, and was more particularly had in Esteem 'for his Knowledge and Proficiency in the Occult 'Sciences. From a Gentleman thus qualified, 'what might I not have hoped for? But, Sir, I 'soon understood that all his Predictions and Pro-'phesies were but Dreams and Fables to amuse and 'divert us, and that he understood himself very 'well, when he called himself *Tatler*.

'And now, Sir, after all these fruitless and re-'peated Enquiries, my last and only Refuge is in 'you. You are certainly acquainted with all the 'Secret Springs of Love, and know the hidden 'Causes which make my Heart rise up to every 'She I meet. You can't be ignorant how it comes 'to pass, that my Temper is so various; and my 'Inclinations so floating and changeable, that one 'Object can't confine them, but like a wandring 'Bee they fly at every Flower. I assure you, Mr. '*Myrtle*, my present Disposition is what gives me 'great Concern and Uneasiness. Tell me how I 'may reclaim this Volatile Heart of mine, this de-'sultory Imagination, and keep it within bounds! 'Show me the way to fix it to one, or not Love 'at all. I am not uneasie for your Answer, for I 'must own to you I feel but very little Pain, but 'in some Distempers they say that is an ill Sign.

I am, SIR,

Your most humble Servant,

Charles Lusie.

My Correspondent is come already to the Condition he desires, for if it is not confined to one, it *is* not Love at all; and my Friend *Charles* needs not further Information in his Case, but to be told, that he does not labour under the Passion of Love, but the Vice of Wantonness.

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